

Coming Out Of His Shell

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Coming Out Of His Shell

by [Foifreak](#)

Summary

Ever since he arrived on the Oro Jackson, Buggy had always been an incredibly shy and nervous kid, especially around people he's never met before, and the Whitebeard Pirates were no exception. Of course, like many kids, it's not impossible to lure Buggy out of the tightly sealed shell he tends to lock himself in whenever he's confronted with people he's not comfortable with, granted you have the proper incentive to get him to open up, that is. Lucky for Whitebeard, a slight MIA scare following a friendly scuffle reveals exactly the incentive he needs to get Buggy to open up. Who knew that a kid could get so excited over something as simple as a Library?

Alternatively titled: Buggy goes missing during a fight, Roger panics over losing his boy and goes looking for him, finds him in the most predictable place possible, and then has to make sure that Whitebeard doesn't abduct him and Shanks because he thinks the boys are cute and wants them to be his new adorable little sons.

Notes

Hello, and welcome to my new trainwreck of a short story. For those of you who don't know me, I go by Foifreak here on the inter webs, and I am very well known for writing some of the most self-indulgent fanfiction the internet has ever had the misfortune of reading. Today's dumpster fire is another installment in the One Piece AU that I had absolutely no intentions of making into an AU when I first started writing, but after about 3-4 weeks worth of talking back and forth with the lovely Dragowolf, both on AO3 and Tumblr, I now have more headcannons, characters, and plot bunnies for this AU than I do braincells left to put toward finishing my college degree (not that I had very many to begin with after the shit show that was highschool). Speaking of Dragowolf, this story is dedicated to them, since they were the one who gave me the idea to write this story to begin with, and because they are a wonderful person who I greatly enjoy talking with, and I hope I did their idea justice with this story! I hope you all enjoy!!!

Missing

It isn't very often that the Roger pirates happen upon a pirate crew that is able to give them a run for their money, to challenge them in a way that gets their blood pumping and their hearts beating as they exchange hits and blows, death just a breath away at all times. These sorts of pirate crews are few and far in between as it is, and the fact that the Roger pirates had only just re-entered the Grand Line a few weeks ago after 2 years of touring around the Blue Seas, and picking up a couple of adorable little rascals along the way, made the group of pirates eager and restless for a good fight with a worthy rival crew, and who better to provide such a challenge than the Whitebeard Pirates themselves.

Although Roger and Whitebeard are good friends, and have been for many years now, neither man was against the idea of a good, friendly scuffle between crews. Of course this was not the kind of scuffle that would end with dead nakama, like many of the fights between enemy crews could, and usually do, but it was a good way for the Roger pirates to loosen their stiff muscles and sharpen their fighting skills back up after such a long period of time back in the peaceful tranquility of the blue seas.

"Newgate" Roger calls from the front of the Oro Jackson, standing tall and proud as he regards the larger man, who stands in a similar pose at the front of his own ship, the Moby Dick, a rather massive vessel that is nearly double the size of the Oro Jackson, at least.

"Roger. It's been a while" Newgate greets casually, a smile on his face.

"It's a lovely day today. Don't suppose you'd be interested in a little fighting would you?" Roger asks, placing a hand on the sword by his left hip, a cocky smirk on his face. Whitebeard chuckles, the grip around his own weapon, a large bisento, tightening in response to Roger's challenge.

"I don't know Roger, I am a pretty busy man, but I suppose I could spare a minute or two to put you back in your place."

Roger laughs. "Well aren't you a cocky son of a bitch. I think you'll find that it'll take a bit longer than two minutes to take me down."

“You sure? After all that time on vacation in the blue seas, I’d hate for you to have to eat your words because you haven’t kept up with your training” Whitebeard says, a confident aura beginning to emanate from the gargantuan man.

“Careful Eddy, all that talk will be mighty embarrassing for you when I knock you on your ass” Roger bites back, his own Haki flaring out in response to the other man’s challenge.

The Roger and Whitebeard Pirates all rally behind their captains, excitement and energy beginning to fill them as the anticipation of their fight grows, until finally, after a moment of staring each other down, Roger and Whitebeard finally jump at each other, exchanging the first blows, and their crews follow closely behind.

Several hours pass since the first exchange of blows took place, and now only Roger and Whitebeard are left fighting, their chests heaving, their muscles aching, and their skin slick from sweat, and yet neither man seems even remotely close to calling it quits, as they continue fighting, their movements lacking the same precision they had at the beginning, but containing no less power or spirit behind them. The other members of their crews sit off to the side, away from the action, sitting, talking, and resting their now tired and aching bodies, some of them even having fallen asleep from exhaustion.

Roger and Whitebeard pause their battle for a brief moment, regarding their crews with amused expressions.

“You know... it’s funny...” Roger says, in between large breaths of air. “You were telling me... that me and my crew were gonna be out for the count... in two minutes flat... but it looks like your crew is doing a hell of a lot worse than mine is...”

“Ya well... it’s your fault for ditching us for the blue seas... and leaving us without any good training partners for 2 years... we’ve been itching for you to come back... so we’d finally have some worthy opponents... who can actually give us a challenge...” Whitebeard huffs, not lowering his guard for even a moment, as he regards the man standing in front of him.

“What’s wrong Eddy... the Grand Line not cutting it for you anymore... maybe you should drop by navy headquarters... see if Garp or Sengoku will indulge you in a spar... might cost

you your head though...”

Whitebeard allows himself to laugh at that. “Thanks for the advice... but I’d rather not go parading into enemy territory looking for a fight... literally...”

“Eh... it was worth a shot...” Roger shrugs, lowering his guard and standing up, using his shirt to wipe at the sweat that drenched his forehead and neck. Whitebeard remains on guard for a moment longer, as though he doesn’t trust the sudden casualness of his rival, but eventually relaxes himself, standing up to his full height.

“Man, that felt good” the raven haired man says, stretching and cracking his neck with a satisfied groan. “What do you say we call it a day and pick this fight up another time? I’m starting to get pretty hungry.”

“Hm. Very well. I suppose it wouldn’t be good if we pushed it too far and you accidentally dropped dead from overexertion” Whitebeard says teasingly, an amused grin on his face.

“You wanna run that by me again old man, I couldn’t hear you over the sound of your heart palpitating. You take your meds this morning?” Roger snips back, raising a middle finger to the taller man, which pulls a hearty laugh from Whitebeard.

“Ya ya, laugh while you can, but from the looks of things, I think our crews might actually be in worse shape than we are” Whitebeard says, pointing over to where many of their fellow crew mates were sitting, or lying on the ground.

Roger laughs. “Ya I think you might be right about that.”

As Roger scans the groups of people littered about on Whitebeard’s ship, he makes a mental note of each of his crew mates, counting them off by name one by one in his head as he makes sure that everyone who was present at the beginning of the fight, is still present now.

‘Xavier, Kelly, Duran, Gaban, Wilson, Seagull, Rayleigh, Nox, Druth, Crocus, Shanks, Buggy... Buggy... Buggy?’ Roger looks around, scanning over the groups of people once again, in search of his youngest son, only to realize that the head of blue hair he’s so used to seeing attached to Shanks’ hip, is nowhere to be found. A feeling of panic and worry sets itself deep within Roger’s chest, slowly but surely growing with each passing second the raven haired man is unable to locate Buggy’s whereabouts.

“Looking for something?” Whitebeard asks, taking notice of the other man’s growing restlessness, as his looked hurriedly around for something, or someone.

“I’m looking for my cabin boy” Roger replied shortly.

“The redhead’s over there isn’t he? What was his name again?”

“No, not that one, the other one” Roger snips.

“You have two?”

“Yes, I have two of them, you dimwitted twat. The redhead is Shanks but I’m looking for Buggy, the little blue haired kid.”

“Buggy? What kind of a name is that?” Whitebeard chuckles, and although its not an insult directed at Roger himself, for some reason the raven haired man takes offense to it.

“Shut up Eddy.” Roger barks, and Whitebeard merely shrugs, grabbing his coat that he ditched halfway through their sparring match, before heading over to his chair and picking up the half-empty keg of booze he had been drinking before Roger’s crew had been spotted. The large man takes a swig, sitting back down in his chair. Roger rolls his eyes.

“Rayleigh” Roger calls over to his first mate, catching the man’s attention. “Have you seen Buggy anywhere?”

“Buggy?” Rayleigh questions aloud, turning to search for the boy in question, before returning his gaze back toward Roger, a suspicious look on his face. “You know, now that you mention it, I haven’t seen him at all. Not since we spotted Whitebeard earlier today at least.”

Roger groans, continuing to search for the boy, only barely keeping his worry, as well as the intense urge to rip the Moby Dick apart until Buggy is found, at bay.

“Shanks” Roger calls, watching as the small red headed boy runs over to him.

“Da- er, Captain, did you see me fighting out there? Everyone was really strong, but I did my best and showed them my grit just like you told me to” Shanks rambles excitedly, looking up at the taller man with wide eyes and a big grin, the excitement and adrenaline from experiencing his first real fight in the Grand Line having not yet worn off.

Roger chuckles slightly at Shanks’ excited prattling, a fond smile spreading across his face when the redhead nearly called him ‘Dad’ rather than ‘Captain’ like he’d been instructed to when they were in the presence of rival or enemy crews. Roger didn’t necessarily mind either of the boys referring to him as ‘Dad’ when they were alone, or even when they were in the presence of the Whitebeards, but objectively he knew it was better in the long run if they avoided such familial terms when in the presence of people they didn’t trust as much, if only to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to either of the boys. Roger might have taken on the role of Shanks and Buggy’s father, and happily so, but that didn’t mean he wanted the entire world to know about that, and potentially use that knowledge against him.

“Where’s Buggy?” Roger asks calmly once the redhead comes to a stop in front of him, trying not to let on how concerned he was about the younger boy’s mysterious absence. Shanks tilts his head to the side in confusion, before a thoughtful expression crosses his face. The redhead turns and scans the crowds of people, much like how Roger and Rayleigh just had.

“We came onto the ship together… we must have gotten separated during the fight somehow…” Shanks trails off, beginning to pick at the rim of, what was once Roger’s, straw hat, a nervous tick the boy has had for as long as Roger has known the boy, and a telltale sign of his own budding worry. Roger gently ruffles the boy’s hair, smiling down at him.

“Don’t worry, we’ll find him” Roger assures, turning toward the crowd of Whitebeard Pirates.

“Hey, you guys” the raven haired man calls out, catching the group of rival pirates’ attentions. The group look over at Roger and Shanks with mildly annoyed, but curious expressions. “Any of you seen a kid around here, small, smaller than this one, blue hair, green eyes, red nose, probably trying to crawl into a vent somewhere?”

The group of men all exchange confused and unsure glances, before one of them, a large man with darkened skin, long curly black hair, an elongated nose, and a few missing teeth, raises his hands. “I saw a little kid skittering below deck a little while ago. He was real small and had blue hair like you said. I figured he came on with you guys and was probably looking for a place to hide away from all the action so I didn’t say anything or try to stop him, but if you want to find him your best bet is to start down there.”

“Below deck, huh?” Roger asks aloud, turning to regard Whitebeard, who had overheard the entire conversation.

“Permission to go below deck and search for my missing cabin boy, Eddy?” Roger asks, only half-teasingly, as he would very much like to find his missing boy. Whitebeard finishes swallowing what remains of the keg in his hands, setting it down on the ground.

“Marco” the blonde man calls, catching the attention of another young boy, a few years older than Shanks and Buggy, maybe 12 or 13 by the looks of him, who comes trotting over to his captain’s side.

“Ya Pops?” The boy, Marco, asks.

Whitebeard points at Roger and Shanks. “Take these two below deck. One of their crewmates wandered down there during our sparring session and they’d like to find him. It’s the little one, uh... Bucky right?”

“It’s **Buggy**” Shanks corrects, rather rudely. Roger calms him wordlessly with a hand to the top of the head.

Whitebeard chuckles and puts his hands up in mock defense, clearly having not taken offence to Shanks’ outburst. “Right, Buggy, my apologies. Marco take Roger and Shanks down to find Buggy will you? It shouldn’t take too long, and I doubt he went in any of the cabins, either.”

“Sure” Marco says, walking over to Roger and Shanks. “Follow me.”

Roger, for once, does as he’s told and follows behind the blonde haired boy, with Shanks walking closely behind, his little fist gripping the side of Roger’s pant leg as they are led by Marco through the door and down the stairs into the depths of the Moby Dick, hoping and praying that their namaka is safe and sound.

Argument

Chapter Notes

New chapter. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Marco leads them through the lower deck of the Moby Dick, stopping in front of rooms and opening the door, allowing Roger and Shanks to go in and look around for their missing crew mate, while he stands guard outside, closing the door behind them when the two exit.

A while passes as Roger and Shanks continue their search, and while Roger had been mildly worried when he first realized Buggy was missing, he was now in somewhat of a nervous panic, not wanting to believe that something bad could have happened to his youngest charge on an ally ship, but also realizing that, at the end of the day, this was a pirate ship, and while the Roger and Whitebeard Pirates were technically allies, the raven haired man realized that some members of Whitebeard's crew might not be too happy about their alliance, and may have decided to take out their grievances on little Buggy.

The thought makes Roger nauseous.

“Well guys, I don’t know what to tell you” Marco says, closing the door to the mess hall, the last room in the hallway before a long row of cabins that neither Shanks nor Roger were allowed to enter. “You’ve searched ever room in this section of the ship, and while I understand you want to find your crewmate, I unfortunately can’t allow you to just waltz into people’s cabins and go rifling around in their stuff.”

“But we’re not ‘rifling around’, we’re trying to find Buggy” Shanks argues, an indignant frown set upon his usually bright and happy face. Marco rolls his eyes and ignores Shanks, turning his attention to Roger.

“If Pops gives you the ok, I can let you into the cabins, but I should warn you, there are a lot of them, and I can guarantee you that some people will be real unhappy about a non-member

of the crew going into their cabins, even if you have Pops' permission" Marco says, and Roger nods in understanding.

"And the mess hall is the last place in this section of the ship before the cabins?" Roger asks, curiously. Marco remains silent for a moment as he thinks.

"Well... there is one more place we could check. It's kind of out of the way, but I suppose if the kid was looking for a place to hide that might be exactly what he was looking for" Marco says aloud, though seemingly more to himself than to Roger or Shanks, before turning around and heading down the hallway, motioning for Roger and Shanks to follow.

Roger quickly loses track of where exactly they are within the labyrinth that is the Moby Dick, and he briefly wonders if Marco is leading them in circles, a thought that is thankfully proven false when the blonde finally opens a door and steps out of the way. Roger immediately feels like a total idiot upon entering the room and sees the massive wooden bookcases, filled to the brim with books of all shapes and sizes, that line the walls of the full scale library that Whitebeard had decked out on his ship. Seated in one of the large comfy chairs that sat toward the back of the library, happily reading away surrounded by a mountain of books, was Buggy, because of course he'd somehow be able to sniff out where the books were kept despite how massive this ship was.

"Buggy" Roger calls from the entrance to the Library, catching the boy's attention.

"Hi Buggy" Shanks yells excitedly, running over to his friend, Roger soon following behind him.

"Hi" Buggy greets back, turning his attention back to his book as Shanks approaches him, hopping into the chair next to Buggy and scooting so that they are seated side by side.

"Having a good time?" Roger asks, crossing his arms as he stands in front of Buggy, trying to sound stern and disapproving.

"Yup" the boy replies simply, unaware of the near heart attack he gave his adopted father after disappearing suddenly and without warning on a rival ship. The raven haired man rolls

his eyes but ruffles Buggy's hair affectionately anyways. Roger knows that he should probably punish the boy for running off without permission, but at the moment he was simply too relieved that he was safe and sound after all. Besides, punishing was more Rayleigh's territory anyways.

"So this is where he was hiding, huh?" Whitebeard says, ducking down as he enters through the door to the library and walks toward the group of Roger pirates. Buggy tenses up and his eyes go wide as Whitebeard approaches, his gaze snapping back down to his book when the elder man looks down at him.

"Find anything interesting?" Whitebeard asks, a casual smile on his lips. Buggy says nothing in response, staring down at the book in his lap with a nervous expression, as he begins curling in on himself nervously, disregarding any and all of Whitebeard's attempts to engage with him.

Roger sighs. Buggy always did this when he was around new people. Crocus said it was a coping mechanism or something along those lines; a way of preventing himself from forming attachments to people who could potentially hurt or abandon him later on. Around people he was comfortable and familiar with, Buggy was your typical 6 year old kid, running around, having fun, and getting into all sorts of trouble, but around strangers, he would shut himself up completely, and while having Shanks around to bridge that gap helped in most situations, it appeared as though this was one instance where Shanks would be of little help in getting Buggy to open up.

Whitebeard looked up at Roger with a curious expression, wordlessly asking why the boy was ignoring him, to which Roger merely shrugged, having long since given up trying to force Buggy to interact with people he didn't want to, since that tended to only make things of hell of a lot worse than simply leaving him alone would.

Whitebeard hummed in consideration for a moment, before he finally noticed the large book seated in the small boy's lap. He raised a questioning eyebrow before speaking.

"You know, that book you're reading is actually the second installment in the series and the story is a little confusing if you don't start it from the beginning. We have the first book here if you'd like to start out with that?" Whitebeard offers, and for a moment Buggy simply remains silent, his gaze fixed on some random spot on the page he was reading, before he finally answers.

“I already read it” Buggy says quietly. Roger looks down at Buggy, surprised that he actually answered Newgate’s question.

“Really?” The gargantuan man asks. “So you already have the first book then?”

“No” Buggy replies curtly with a shake of his head. Whitebeard regards the boy with a curious expression.

“I see. So you must have read it in a library somewhere then?”

“Nope” Buggy replies again, still not looking up from the page. Whitebeard’s curious expression shifts to confusion.

“Then… where did you read the first book?”

“Here. I finished it an hour ago” Buggy clarifies, and Whitebeard casts a confused glance Roger’s way, but before Roger can say anything to his friend, Marco speaks up.

“Hold on a second” the young blonde says, moving from his spot at the door toward the blue haired boy, a suspicious look on his face.

“You mean to tell me that between the time you arrived in the library and now” Marco begins, picking up a large tome-like book and holding it in his hands “you managed to read this whole book, cover to cover, finish it, and start the second book, despite the first book being over 800 pages, and having taken me over 2 weeks to finish?”

“Is that a problem?” Buggy snips, looking up from the page of his book and staring at the blonde boy with a mixture of offense and sheer defiance. Marco, naturally, does not take too well to being stared down by a 6 year old, and his face curls into a snarl.

“It’s not a problem, I just find it hard to imagine that a little **brat** like you could actually read, much less truly understand the mastery of a literary work such as one written by Lemare” Marco says, putting extra emphasis on the word brat. Buggy’s face tightens into a glare of his own.

“Well that’s rich coming from someone so dumb that it took him two weeks to read and understand what was going on” Buggy snapped, causing Marco to clench his fists, his face reddening in anger.

“WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY TO ME YOU LITTLE BRAT?” Marco yelled, lunging at Buggy for an attack, only to be stopped by Whitebeard.

“That’s enough” Whitebeard orders, holding Marco back by the arm, preventing the young boy from strangling Buggy, who had curled into a defensive little ball, his legs hiked up and prepared to lash out if needed. Marco calms down after a moment, and Whitebeard sends a disapproving look down at his son.

“And since when is that sort of behavior acceptable on this ship?” Whitebeard asks, his voice stern as he scolds Marco. The blonde boy deflates and averts his gaze from his father, muttering something under his breath. Buggy sticks his tongue out at Marco. Roger flicks him in the forehead.

“Ow,” Buggy whines “what was that for?”

“Don’t think you’re guilt free in this” Roger scolds lightly. “What have I told you about getting defensive and running your mouth?”

Buggy frowns. “If you don’t have anything nice to say, then don’t say anything at all” the boy says, repeating the words that Roger told him after he’d accidentally gotten himself into a spot of trouble earlier this year because he’d mouthed off to a group of local criminals on an island they were staying at and nearly gotten himself beaten to a bloody pulp after they had insulted Roger and the crew.

"That's right. Now maybe try putting that little piece of advice into practice from now on" Roger says sternly. Shanks laughs.

"Haha, Buggy you got in trouble" the redhead says happily, as though this were somehow amusing to him. Buggy whips around and glares at his friend, but says nothing in response. Roger and Whitebeard exchange knowing glances.

"Well, since it's become rather apparent that both you and Buggy share a rather... passionate love of books, why don't you take Buggy and show him your personal collection, Marco?" Whitebeard suggests, though his tone of voice makes it sound more like a command than a suggestion.

Marco stares up at his father in disbelief. "You're joking right?"

"Do I sound like I'm joking?" Whitebeard asks. Marco's mouth drops open and flaps open and closed, but nothing intelligible actually comes out of it and the boy groans when Newgate gives him a stern look.

"Fine" Marco reluctantly agrees "I'll show him my books, so long as he doesn't touch any of them."

Buggy regards Marco with a suspicious look, glancing up at Roger, looking for some form of permission or affirmation that this was really ok.

"Go on now" Roger encourages, gently taking the large book that Buggy had seated on his lap and ushering the small boy to follow after Marco. Once he reaches the door to the library, Buggy looks back at Roger with a slightly nervous expression for a moment, before finally exiting the room, following Marco to his cabin, where the blonde kept his own personal book collection.

"You think that was a good idea, sending them off by themselves?" Whitebeard asks Roger. The raven haired man shrugs his shoulders as he heaves Shanks onto his shoulders, having had the redhead stay behind so that Buggy could have a chance to make a friend of his own for once.

"I don't see why not. They might have got off on the wrong foot at first, but they both like books, so they at least have that in common" Roger comments. "Besides, Buggy needs to get better at making friends. The way I see it, if he at least makes a friend out of Marco he might be more willing to come out of his shell around the rest of you."

"Ya, Buggy hates people, except us of course" Shanks chimes in, leaning his chin against the top of Roger's head. Roger chuckles.

"Well, I don't know if I'd go that far, he just tends to shut himself up and doesn't trust people very easily. There was a time when he first arrived on the ship that he didn't trust us after all. Remember?"

"Ya but that was only around you guys. Buggy trusted me and we became friends right away" Shanks said proudly. "If Marco is nice to Buggy then he'll be just fine, but if Marco is mean, then Buggy might be mean to him back. Buggy can be pretty nasty when he feels threatened, I would know, I still have scars from when he bit me the first time I stuck my hand in the vent to try and fish him out because I thought he got stuck."

Whitebeard laughs and nods his head in understanding. "I see, well hopefully things work out the way you want them to and Marco and Buggy can get along, especially since we'll be seeing each other a lot more often since you're back in the Grand Line for the foreseeable future."

"That's the hope" Roger says. "We'll see if things work out in our favor for once."

Chapter End Notes

Yay, Buggy was found, and in his favorite place in the whole wide world no less! Marco and Buggy start out with kind of a shaky relationship because Marco is a hormonal 13 year old who thinks he knows everything and Buggy is a little 6 year old who is kind of shy and closed off but also really fiesty and defiant when he feels the need and doesn't like being treated like a kid or being looked down on, so they kind of hit it off very

poorly at first, but don't worry, they end up friends at the end of the day. Shanks is better at socializing and making friends, so he'll have no problems in that regard. Roger just wants his boys to get along with Whitebeard's boys because he and Newgate are friends so naturally their boys should be friends, but of course things don't work out the way they should for people like Roger. Poor Roger. P.S. Marco being a moody teenager is now one of my new favorite things in the entire world, its literally hilarious for me to write this!!!

I think there's only gonna be 1 more chapter, but that might change depending on how things turn out once I finally start writing, since the ideas I have in my head when I start writing rarely end up working out once its time to actually work them into a story, so we shall see if my prediction is correct, or if this ends up getting a 4th chapter. Who knows, but we'll find out in a day or two. Anyways I hope you all enjoyed this chapter, let me know what you thought of this chapter down in the comments below, thanks so much for reading, and I hope to see you all soon for chapter 3. Bye!

The Little Book Thief

Chapter Notes

New chapter. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“GET BACK HERE YOU LITTLE BOOK THIEF!!!”

The sound of Marco’s voice echoing out from below deck catches the attention of both Roger and Whitebeard, who had migrated back up to the main deck and taken a seat on the ground, helping themselves to Newgate’s plentiful supply of alcohol.

“Well, that was nice while it lasted” Roger says, slightly disappointed that barely an hour had passed before another problem arose between Buggy and Marco. The raven haired man stood up, and made his way toward the door that led down into the lower decks. The door was slightly ajar, and even from the outside Roger could hear the sound of yelling and screaming from Marco, as well as the pitter patter of tiny feet against the hardwood floors, accompanied by heavy breathing, which grew louder and louder with every passing second.

Stepping to the side, Roger shields himself behind the slightly opened door and readies himself, counting down in his head until a familiar head of blue hair bursts out of the door and guns it toward the Oro Jackson at a rather impressive speed considering his small size and stubby legs, a large, leather bound book cradled in his arms. Despite the rapid speed at which he is moving, Buggy’s pace is no match for Roger’s gargantuan strides, and it only takes about 3 steps before Roger has caught up to the boy, and scooped him up in his arms, preventing him from escaping into the safety of the Oro Jackson.

“Well look at what I’ve caught” Roger says, an amused smile on his face. Buggy deflates as he sits in his captor’s arms and tightens his grip on the book he has clutched to his chest, not even bothering to resist.

“Aw nuts” Buggy curses under his breath, as Marco comes storming onto the main deck, red faced and breathing heavily. He eyes Buggy with a dirty, seething look, and the small boy,

buries his face in Roger's shoulder, as though that's going to help him in this situation.

"**You**" Marco growls at Buggy, who whimpers fearfully, shrinking in on himself as Marco stomps toward them.

"Hand him over" the boy demands, sticking his hand out toward Roger, a stern scowl etched across his face. An amused smirk makes its way onto Rogers lips.

"Funny. I don't recall having to take orders from a 10 year old brat" Roger quips, taking great pleasure in the way Marco's face reddens and his scowl deepens.

"First of all, I'm 13, not 10, there's a big difference. I'm pretty much a grown up."

"Oh really?" Roger questions, casting Whitebeard a knowing glance, who merely shrugs with an amused grin on his face. Marco says nothing in response to Roger's obvious disbelief of his previous statement.

"Second of all" the young blonde continues, "that little brat right there has my limited edition, **signed** copy of 'Layman's Guide to Astrological Navigation'."

"Lay-who's guide to astro-what?" Roger asks, a confused expression etched across his face. Marco groans and rolls his eyes, positively exasperated about having to explain, what he believed to be, such a simple concept to a grown up.

"Astrological navigation, you know, using the stars to find your way around" the blonde boy explains, rather condescendingly.

"But you can't use the stars to navigate in the grand line, that's what we have log poses for" Roger argues, though this argument only seems to annoy Marco, who rolls his eyes again and pinches the bridge of his nose.

Is it sadistic that Roger enjoys toying with the young teen as much as he does? Because he's enjoying riling the kid up way more than he probably should.

"You know what, I'm not even gonna bother with you, just give me my book back and get the hell off our ship" Marco demands, the snarl from earlier returning to the young boys face.

Roger laughs. "You hear that Eddy? Looks like I'm being kicked off your ship."

"Well you heard the kid, get the fuck out then" Whitebeard says jokingly, jerking his thumb toward the Oro Jackson. Roger laughs again. Marco looks like he wants to stab his eyes out with a fork, so Roger stops with the fooling around, and places Buggy back on the ground. The small boy clutches the book to his chest and hides himself behind Rogers leg, keeping a careful eye on Marco.

"Alright kiddo, time to give the book back" Roger says to Buggy, reaching over to take the book from the boy's grasp.

"NO" Buggy yells, recoiling and taking a few steps back.

"Buggy" Roger says sternly.

"No" Buggy argues. "He doesn't take good care of them. They're all dusty and grimy, the covers are old and tattered, and he dog-ears the pages."

"That's not true, I take great care of my books" Marco snaps angrily.

Roger sighs, bending down on one knee to be near eye level with Buggy. The boy avoids eye contact, still clutching the book to his chest.

"Come on Bug, that book doesn't belong to you. You need to give it back to Marco." Roger says calmly, placing his hand on the boy's back. Buggy doesn't shrug the hand off like Roger

expected him to, but he makes no move to return the stolen book either. Marco taps his foot on the ground impatiently.

“Marco” Whitebeard calls, catching the boy’s attention. “Perhaps you could try asking politely for your book back.”

Marco casts a disbelieving, and slightly betrayed, expression toward his father. “You’ve got to be fucking kidding me” The boy complains, but Newgate’s piercing glare shuts him up. Marco groans in annoyance, but approaches Buggy anyways. He glares down at the boy for a moment before speaking.

“Can I **please** have my book back?” Marco grumbles reluctantly. Buggy eyes the older boy warily for a moment before casting a pleading glance up at Roger. The raven haired man merely crosses his arms and gives the small boy an expectant look.

Buggy mutters something unintelligible under his breath, but ultimately relents, and hands the book, oh so reluctantly, back to Marco.

“Thank you” Marco says gruffly, swiping the book back and tucking it under his arm. Buggy pouts angrily and crosses his arms over his chest, though Roger can clearly see the slight tremble of his lips and the slowly accumulating wetness in his eyes.

‘Uh oh, this is about to take a sour turn’ Roger thinks to himself, as he quickly tries to come up with some way to mediate this situation before it devolves into tears and a massive tantrum. Thankfully, Whitebeard seems to have taken note of Buggy’s rapidly worsening mood, and steps in to lend a hand.

“Well, if Marco isn’t willing to share one of his books, perhaps you’d be interested in reading one from my collection, Buggy?” Newgate offers, catching everybody, especially Marco, off guard.

“What… kind of books do you have?” Buggy asks the old man warily, but Roger can clearly see the spark of curiosity hidden behind the wall of caution that the boy so regularly puts between himself and any possible threat.

“Oh I have all sorts of books” Whitebeard says. “My personal collection isn’t quite as impressive as the library, but the ones I do have are all books that I’ve collected over the years and have read many times. Would you like to see it?”

For a moment, Buggy simply stares at Whitebeard, his face filled with a myriad of emotions: uncertainty, distrust, apprehension, etc., as he regards the older man standing before him. Roger honestly expects Buggy to look up at him, like he always does, for some sort of reassurance that it was alright, that he would be safe with Newgate despite the paranoid voice in the back of his head that often tells him otherwise, but this time Buggy did not look up at Roger with those big green eyes of his, silently pleading for that little push he sometimes needs to step outside his comfort zone. No, this time Buggy merely stares up at Whitebeard, his apprehension slowly but surely giving way to the boy’s growing curiosity, and his ferocious desire to get his hands on a good book.

“Ya. I-I would like to see them” Buggy says softly, nodding excitedly.

“I wanna see them too” Shanks shouts, popping up from out of nowhere to insert himself in the conversation. Whitebeard laughs kindly.

“Very well then, you’re both more than welcome to take a look at my collection if you’d like, I’m sure I can find something that will suit both your tastes” the elder blonde says, standing up and leading both Shanks and Buggy to his bunk,

“You’re welcome to come with us as well Marco” Whitebeard says to his son. “That is, if you’re not “too cool” to hang around with your old man.”

Marco glares at Whitebeard, clearly not enjoying his father’s teasing tone. Despite this, Marco follows behind after only a moments hesitation, brooding all the while.

Peace finally falls over the Moby Dick as everyone settles themselves down for food and drinks, courteous of the Moby Dick chefs, and while Roger is having a wonderful time relaxing his aching muscles in the aftermath of his fight against Whitebeard, Shanks sitting calmly in his lap reading a picture book, Newgate’s attention is more than enraptured by the energetic head of blue hair currently bouncing around in his lap.

“What happens next? How did the ship get out of the mist? Did it ever get out of the mist? What happened to the kids who were trapped? Did they get free? Where’s the last book? How does something like that work? Is it magic? Is it like a portal to another dimension? Are there ALIENS?”

Newgate laughs as the questions roll out of the small boy’s mouth in an endless stream, barely leaving any room for the older man to actually answer any of them. Various members of the Oro Jackson had run for cover when Buggy came running out of Newgate’s cabin, book in hand, with a litany of questions on his mind that he demanded someone answer.

It wasn’t that anybody thought that Buggy’s curiosity or questions were a bad thing necessarily, it’s just that the sheer amount of questions he asked, as well as the rather complicated topics he asked about, meant that most of the Roger pirates didn’t really have answers for his questions most of the time, which was dissatisfying for both parties. On top of that the boy had a rather annoying habit of asking them at rather inconvenient times, such as at 4 in the morning, while everyone was asleep, or at 2 in the afternoon, when everyone was hungover and in no mood to deal with the boy’s or their antics.

Newgate, on the other hand, seemed to find Buggy’s endless questions and curiosity to be nothing short of adorable, and humored the boy’s ravenous appetite for knowledge and information the best he could.

“Well that’s the mystery of it. We don’t know what happens next because there is no other book, at least I haven’t been able to find it. As far as any of us know, the kids were probably stuck in that mist for the rest of their lives. But who knows, maybe they escaped somehow and that’s how these books were published. That’s what I like to think at least” Whitebeard answered and even from across the way, Roger could see the gears in Buggy’s head turning and spinning as he processed the brand new info given to him.

“It doesn’t make any sense though” Marco interjects. “If the kids actually did make it out alive, wouldn’t they publish a final book saying that they made it out and are living normal lives?”

Roger raises a questioning eyebrow at the blonde. “Well then, in that case, what do **you** think happened to them, Marco?”

“Well it’s pretty obvious based on the last chapter of the final book that things weren’t looking too good for the group of stranded kids. They’re food stocks were running short, they were due to run out of water in a matter of days, and their leader was crumbling under the pressure of keeping morale up. They likely ran out of food and water, or their leader cracked under the weight of their responsibilities and the team fell apart, causing everyone to slowly succumb to dehydration or starvation at some point, if they didn’t end the suffering early by just jumping into the sea.”

“Marco, what have I told you about reeling in the teen angst?” Whitebeard asks after a moment of tense and confused silence, causing Roger to bust out laughing as the teen in question turns to glare angrily at his father. Shanks and Buggy cast each other confused glances between one another, clearly not quite understanding what’s what’s going on or what “teen angst” is. Roger and Whitebeard, on the contrary, have a grand ol’ laugh as Marco hastily attempts to strengthen his previous argument, growing more and more frustrated and agitated the more the older males laugh at him. It wasn’t that they were making fun of Marco per say, its just that watching a teenager get his panties in a wad, regardless of what its over, is just really fucking funny, especially since both Roger and Newgate both remember being the same way, or something similar, when they were that age.

“Well maybe they did make it out alive but the last book got lost, or was never published” Shanks chimes in, ever the optimist.

“Maybe. I wouldn’t rule it out completely” Roger says, shrugging his shoulders.

“I guess we’ll never know, that is, unless someone finds that last book” Whitebeard says. Buggy merely sits on his lap for a moment, a pensive gaze on his face. It quickly drops to one of annoyance and indignation.

“Well that sucks” the boy says, crossing his little arms over his chest. “Now what am I supposed to do? I don’t have an ending to my story.”

Newgate chuckles and gently pats Buggy on the head, smiling fondly at the little boy. “Well I’m afraid there isn’t anything I can do about this story, but perhaps we could find something else to entertain you with.”

"Like what?" Buggy asks, staring up at Whitebeard with a puzzled expression, cocking his head to the side slightly.

"Well, you saw the library earlier, and you seemed to have no issues finding suitable reading material for yourself. You mentioned how you've read all the books you've collected on your ship, so why don't you go pick out a few things that look interesting and take a few with you?"

Buggy stares at Whitebeard for a moment, that puzzled look still etched onto his features, before it finally clicks and the lightbulb in his brain goes on, causing Buggy to immediately brighten, a wide smile spreading across his face as he flapped his hands excitedly.

"R-really? I can take some?" Buggy asks, his eyes practically shining with the excitement of adding to his ever-growing library. Whitebeard laughs again.

"Of course you can. I've read everything in that library 3-times over, and I've read all the books in my personal collection more times than I can count. I've been meaning to get myself some new reading material, so letting go of a few wouldn't be the worst thing in the world before I brought more on. So go ahead, take as many as you'd like."

A shriek of excitement is the only thing that leaves Buggy's mouth as he scrambles off of Newgates lap, and sprints back to the library. Shanks promptly throws the picture book he was leafing through to the side and jumps out of Roger's lap, laughing loudly as he follows behind his friend, and disappears below deck with Marco running after them screaming something about not going anywhere near his personal collection, or something along those lines.

"Well that was the cutest thing I've seen all week" Newgate comments after a moment of silence.

Roger laughs. "Ya those two are great. Don't get me wrong, they can be royal pains in the ass sometimes, but they're such a fucking riot to be around. Always making sure other people are happy and laughing, even if it means making asses out of themselves, though to be fair they probably copied that from me. But ya, they're absolutely adorable!" Roger replies fondly, a plethora of memories of all the incredibly hilarious and heartwarming things the boys do on a regular basis coming to mind.

“How much you want for them?”

A moment of silence passes.

“Come again?” Roger asks, casting a confused glance toward his friend. Whitebeard jabs a thumb in the direction both the boys had gone.

“How much you want for them?”

“How much do I want for who?”

“Your boys?”

“How much of what do I want?”

“Money?”

“How much money do I want for my boys?”

“I don’t know, Roger, how much money do you want for your boys?”

“...”

“...”

"I'M NOT FUCKING SELLING MY BOYS TO YOU!?!?!?!" Roger shouts indignantly, his face curling into one of shock and disbelief over the fact that his friend of over 30 years now had just offered to buy his cabin boys/sons off of him, for probably a very low price not even remotely close to the value that Roger would put on the two boys in the hypothetical situation that he did sell them, **which he never fucking would.**

Whitebeard rubs at the tears forming under his eyes after a bout of intense laughter, before turning back to Roger. "Oh well, it was worth a try. I figured you were too emotionally invested to hand them over anyways."

"Yup. That's me. Gol D. Roger. 'King of getting emotionally invested in shit that he probably shouldn't'."

"Ya, that habits gotten you into a lot of trouble over the years now that I think about it."

"Oh you don't even know the half of it" Roger admits, taking a swig from his beer bottle and saying no more.

Whitebeard laughs heartily, reaching over and clapping Roger on the back with a knowing grin on his face. "Welcome to parenthood, Roger."

"Shut the fuck up, Eddy."

Chapter End Notes

The beginning part of this chapter is based on a conversation Dragowolf and I had on tumblr a while back where we talked about Buggy's love for books getting him into loads of trouble, one of the most notable, and funniest, was one where Buggy tries to steal a book from Marco, where he is promptly, and accurately, nicknamed "The Little Book Thief". I was originally going to make that its own fanfic, but I decided to add it into this one because a) it wasn't something I felt I could add a lot of depth to without some form of context and b) this fic needed a bit more spice to it, so it just ended up working out this way in the end. I'm actually very pleased with this fact, because it

means I can cram more shitty headcannons and hilarious conversation topics into one fanfic without having to write a million others.

Sorry for the long wait, I'm currently going through some family emergencies right now, which means that I have little time, or conversely, little energy left at the end of the day to write anything. I had a sudden start of inspiration earlier today and decided to ride the wave as best I could after I put my 4 year old cousin to sleep. Had to wait until after she fell asleep because she goes absolutely bonkers every time she sees it and refuses to stop pestering me to let her play games on it, and cries every time I say no. Her older brother is much the same way, except not only does he ask a million times for a turn to play on it, but he also likes to press the home button and close my screen just to annoy me. Don't get me wrong, they are great kids and I love them to absolute pieces, but they sure as hell love the iPad too, and are willing to do just about anything to get a turn on such an exciting device. Context: their parents aren't against technology or anything, but they don't go out and buy them loads of tech stuff to play with and mostly just tell them to go outside and play with friends, but because Cousin Genevieve is in town and because its been hot as balls lately, they tend to spend a lot of time indoors with me, and i usually let them do whatever on the iPad as a way to keep them entertained when puzzles and board games start to bore them, and to give me a break and surf tumblr on my phone. However this also means that I have 0 access to my iPad pretty much all day because I'm apparently not allowed a turn on my own damn iPad. Oh well, i suppose this is what I get for giving them free range on the iPad in the first place.

Anyways, i hope you all enjoyed this chapter. Please make sure to comment down below and let me know what you thought of this chapter, there's one more chapter on the way so stay tuned for that coming sooner rather than later hopefully. Thank you all so much for reading and as always i will see you all soon for chapter 4. Bye!!! <3

Who's your Daddy, er... Pops?

Chapter Notes

New chapter. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

A couple more hours pass before Shanks, Buggy, and Marco come back to the main deck of the Moby Dick. By now most of the pirates in both crews have retreated back to their respective ships, either for dinner or for an early bed time. Unfortunately the crews weren't allowed to be in contact for very long due to the worry that their prolonged meeting might alert the marines and cause the trigger happy sons of bitches to send out a battle ship of two in the hopes of locking them all away in Impel Down, so they'd have to say their goodbyes within the next few hours if hell on earth was to be avoided.

Just as Roger was about to get up and head down to the library to collect Shanks and Buggy, the two boys finally returned, with Marco in tow, their arms filled completely with books that Buggy had picked out.

"Hold it right there you three" Roger shouts, causing the trio of boys to come to a stop. He approaches them and does a rough count of all the books the boys have brought up. In a more sober state Roger might have been able to get a more exact number, but after several kegs of booze Roger was far past that point, however in his drunken haze he could tell that, between the three of them, there were probably somewhere between 25 and 30 books stashed in their arms. As much as Roger was a massive enabler in Buggy's love of reading and therefor his rather extensive library, he had to draw the line at some point and put his foot down regarding just how many books Buggy was allowed to have at one time.

"Now I'm no mathematician, but I do know how to count to 10, and using that wonderful skill I can see that you three have approximately... way more than that on your hands. Go put some of 'em back" Roger orders, his words slightly slurred from all the alcohol. Marco gives him a weird look but Shanks and Buggy seem completely unaffected by their captain's slightly drunken state.

"But Dad, Whitebeard said that I could take as many as I wanted" Buggy argued, tightening his grip on the stack of books he had in his arms. A few heads turn to look at Roger and the

kids with confused or amused expressions on their faces, clearly having not expected Buggy to refer to Roger by such a title, despite the fact that they refer to their own captain by a rather similar one.

Roger sighs. “I don’t give a shit what Eddy said. I say you can’t bring all those books on the ship with you.”

“But Daaaaaaaaaad” Buggy whines, setting the raven haired man with his best set of puppy dog eyes. Unfortunately for him, Roger is far more immune to said puppy dog eyes while drunk than he is while sober.

“No buts kiddo. I hate to break it to you, but you’re gonna sink the ship if you bring any more of those on board” Roger says, remaining firm in his decision.

“Hey hold on a second” Marco buts in, placing the books he had in his arms back on the ground so he can place his hands on his hips. “You mean to tell me that I just spent the past 3 hours helping this little twit get books off of high shelves and carry all of those up to the main deck, only for you to say they have to go back?”

“Uh, ya, that’s kind of how this whole thing works. I tell them what to do, and they do as I say. I’m sure you’re more than familiar with that sort of dynamic considering who your father is?” Roger retorts, not really in the mood to deal with Marco’s sass. “Now go put them back.”

“Can’t I just have a few of them? Pretty please” Buggy pleads, causing Roger to sigh.

“Buggy, you have dozens of books back on the ship. You don’t need anymore.”

“But I already read all of those” the boy argues. “These are new books.”

“Ok, and what are you going to do with the dozens of other books you’ve already read but don’t do anything with that are back on the ship?” Roger asks pointedly.

Buggy glances down at his feet, nervously. “Umm... well, I could...”

Roger sighs, knowing that this can only go downhill from here if he doesn't allow some kind of compromise.

“Alright, tell you what” the raven haired man begins. “You can pick out 8 new books to bring on board, and in the event you want to bring anymore than 8 with you, you have to exchange a book for each extra book you bring. That sound ok to you?”

Buggy remains silent for a moment, contemplating the deal Roger just gave him. For a moment Roger wonders if Buggy is going to try and argue with him, try and convince the older man to let him bring more books with him, but ultimately decides to relent, and nods his head.

“Ok, only 8 books” Buggy repeats quietly.

“Good boy, now go figure out which one's you're gonna take, and which one's you're gonna give back or exchange. We only have an hour until we have to set sail, so get a move on” Roger instructs, stepping out of the way so the trio of boys can head onto the Oro Jackson, and then down below deck toward Shanks and Buggy's shared bunk.

About an hour or so later, both pirate captains begin calling orders to set sail, their time together unfortunately having come to a close for today.

Moments later, Marco appears on the main deck of the Oro Jackson, carrying an armful of books that Roger recognizes to belong to Buggy's collection, or in this situation, used to belong to Buggy's collection, since the boy has apparently decided to trade a fair amount of his old books in favor of the brand new ones he found in Newgates library, not that this bothered Roger any.

Once both ships have been readied for departure, the two crews gather on the main decks of their respective ships, standing behind their captains as they bid each other farewell.

“Well Eddy, it has once again been a pleasure seeing you” Roger states cheerfully, a little saddened that he has to say goodbye to his friend so soon, but confident that they’ll meet each other again soon.

“Indeed it has Roger. You sure I can’t take those two adorable little cabin boys off your hands? We’d take real good care of them for you” Newgate asks.

“In your fucking dreams you slimy son of a bitch” Roger bites, causing the larger man to burst out laughing.

“Well then in that case I guess we’ll just have to see each other more often moving forward” Whitebeard says suggestively.

“I’d be more than willing to arrange that” Roger says “granted you don’t mind getting your ass kicked every time we fight.”

“Now you’re the one who’s dreaming old man.” Both men burst out into hysterical laughter, which their crews join them in, clearly amused with the playful banter between their captains.

“Bye Marco, thanks for helping me pick out my new books” Buggy shouts, waving his arms toward the teen in an attempt to grab his attention.

“Ya, maybe next time we can play together some more” Shanks chimes in, grinning happily.

“Ya ya whatever, you’re welcome I guess” Marco huffs, rolling his eyes in that annoyed teen fashion, but also incapable of hiding the smile that’s spreading across his lips. Roger smiles at his boys, before returning his gaze to Whitebeard.

“Well, I suppose we’ll be off now.”

“As will we” Newgate replies.

And with their goodbyes said, their things packed away, and their ships ready to set sail, both the Oro Jackson and the Moby Dick begin to pull away from one another, and the men on both ships wave and shout to one another, bidding each other good health and safe travels, until they finally disappear from each other’s sight.

Hey Dad?” Shanks asks, catching the raven haired man’s attention as he’s finishing another glass of beer in the mess hall.

“What is it Shanks?” Roger asks.

“Will we be able to see Whitebeard and the others again soon?”

Roger hums in consideration. “I don’t know, would you boys like to see them again soon?”

“I would” Buggy says. “I wanna be able to read more books from their library.”

“Why does that not surprise me?” Roger asks aloud, chuckling to himself. “So, I take it you boys had fun today?”

“YA!” Both Shanks and Buggy yells happily, laughing to themselves as they begin telling Roger about all the things that Marco showed them in the library while they were picking out books.

“Well then if you both really enjoyed yourselves that much, I don’t see why we can’t meet up with Eddy and his crew again” the raven haired man says, both boys cheering in response.

“Ya, I want Whitebeard to teach me how to fight and be a big strong warrior like him” Shanks states, punching the air with his fist.

“I want him to show me the rest of the books in his collection. He’s really smart, isn’t he Dad?” Buggy comments.

“Ya, Eddy is pretty smart now that I think about i-HEY!!! What about me?” Roger asks, squawking indignantly as Shanks and Buggy laugh at their father’s outburst.

“Ya you’re ok too. But Whitebeard is like, totally awesome. I mean he is the strongest man in the whole world” Shanks says.

“Ya, and not only is he super strong, but he’s a really good strategist too, and he’s ruthless in his attacks” Buggy adds on. Roger’s mouth drops open in shock and betrayal at the words coming out of his boys’ mouths.

Eddy? Cooler and more awesome than him? Nonsense, Roger had never heard of anything more preposterous in his entire life, and yet here it was, coming out of the mouths of his own two sons, as though everything he had done for them amounted to nothing.

“Alright then, you boys want ruthless? I’ll show you ruthless” Roger says, rolling his sleeves up with a devilish grin on his face, which Shanks and Buggy take as their cue to run, scampering out of their seats and out the door of the mess hall, Roger in hot pursuit, screaming and laughing as the older man playfully chases them around the ship.

Oh well, Shanks and Buggy might think that Whitebeard is cooler than him, but at the end of the day, they’ll always be his boys, and Roger supposes that he does owe Eddy some thanks for letting Shanks get some fighting experience with his crew during the sparring match earlier that day, as well as helping little Buggy come out of his shell a little bit.

It’ll be a cold day in hell before either of his boys ever refer to Whitebeard as ‘Pops’ though. A very cold day indeed as far as Roger’s concerned.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you all enjoyed this story, thank you again to Dragowolf for giving me so many wonderful story ideas to write and explore!!! I'm not sure when Ill be starting the next story in this series, but hopefully it'll be before too long. Let me know what you think of this chapter and the story as a whole down in the comments below, and as always I hope to see you all for the next one. Bye!!!

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